

experience or a pleasant experience, the vipākacittas have fallen away already and there is thinking.

A. When I pay attention to the shape and form of a chair is that experience also the result of kamma?

B. Paying attention to the shape and form of things is not seeing. At that moment you experience a concept through the minddoor. This is not vipākacitta. While you do so, are you intent on giving, morality (sīla) or mental development?

A. No.

B. Then you pay attention to the shape and form with akusala citta.

A. Can there be attachment even if I do not feel particularly glad when looking ~~at~~ at a chair?

B. Attachment can arise with pleasant feeling or with indifferent feeling. When attachment arises with indifferent feeling we do not notice it most of the time. There are also cittas rooted in ignorance and these are always accompanied by indifferent feeling. We do not notice the innumerable moments of ignorance which arise in a day.

A. Are there often akusala cittas after seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and the experience of tangibles?

B. They are bound to arise. There are many more akusala cittas than kusala cittas in our life. We are attached to visible object, to seeing, to thinking about what we have seen. Are we not attached to looking at all the ~~smaller~~ things around us, and to looking at people? We are attached when we stand up, walk, and take hold of things.

A. We follow our daily routine automatically, and I never realised that there are such an amount of akusala cittas. When I am helping someone can there also be attachment?

B. There are kusala cittas while we are generous, but in between there are also other types of citta arising and falling away. Is there seeing and hearing while you are helping someone?

A. There is bound to be.

B. There are seeing and hearing and ~~there are~~ after seeing and hearing there are likely to be moments of attachment. Then there can be moments of generosity again. Cittas succeed one another very rapidly and if right understanding has not been developed we may not know when there is kusala citta and when there is akusala citta.

A. What can I do in order to ~~W~~ lessen akusala cittas?

B. Akusala can eventually be eradicated by right understanding of the realities which ~~appear at the present moment~~ present themselves through the six doors. However, when we begin to develop right understanding we cannot expect a result immediately.

A. Right understanding of realities is not the same as theoretical knowledge. What is the difference?

B. Theoretical knowledge of realities is acquired by studying, reading and considering what the Buddha taught. This kind of understanding is very useful, but it is not the same as direct understanding

understanding of the realities which present themselves through the ~~six doors~~ senses and through the mind-door. Only when there is mindfulness or non-forgetfulness of the reality which appears right understanding can develop.

A. Can theoretical understanding of realities in addition to mindfulness of the reality appearing at the present moment?

B. Theoretical understanding is a necessary condition for mindfulness. We should first know which are the objects of understanding should be developed of. Our life consists of mental phenomena, nāmas, and physical phenomena, rūpas, which are impermanent. If mindfulness, ~~arises in the mind~~ arises, it can be mindful of one phenomenon at a time as it appears through one of the six doors. Most of the time there is no mindfulness and we live in the world of concepts and ideas we are thinking of. Then understanding of realities ~~is not developed~~ does not develop.

A. I find it hard to grasp the difference between concepts and realities. Can you give an example?

B. Someone sent roses to my husband in which a token of congratulation with a promotion he had received. At this occasion it was clear to me again that we usually live with our thoughts in the world of our thoughts and that there seldom is mindfulness of realities. When we receive roses we recognize that they are roses because of accumulated experiences from the past about them. We may have attachment to them, or there may be aversion when we notice that they are already withering. ~~away~~. Sometimes there may be thinking with wholesome cittas. We may appreciate the generosity of the giver, or the withering ~~may~~ of the roses may remind us of the impermanence of all conditioned realities. The objects of all this thinking are concepts or ideas. These are not realities. Can we notice the difference between thinking of concepts and ^{mindfulness} ~~realities~~ of one reality at a time? If we know this mindfulness can be accumulated.

~~Realities are known through the six doors. Through eyes within subject or colour is experienced.~~

When we receive roses there may be thinking of concepts, but there can also be mindfulness of one reality at a time. Through the eyes colour or visible object is experienced, through the nose odour, through touch hardness or softness can be experienced. One can prove through one's own experience that these objects are completely different from one another; there is no connection between them. Each one of them arises because of its own conditions and is experienced through its appropriate doorway, ~~when colour as it appears~~ one at a time. When odour is experienced there cannot be thinking of the concept rose at the same time, although the thinking can arise shortly after the experience of odour.

A. I do not know how to be mindful. Should I think: 'this is odour', or: 'This is rūpa'?

B. If we merely think there is the experience of concept realities are not known at that moment. Mindfulness

is not thinking of concepts. When odour presents itself and mindfulness, understanding ~~can~~ of this reality can develop. ~~Can~~ be known as only a conditioned reality which is experienced through the nose. It is not a 'thing' such as a rose. In the beginning there cannot be clear understanding yet, but it can develop by being mindful again and again. Right understanding leads to detachment from the idea of 'something' or 'somebody', from the idea of self.

A. You mentioned realities such as visible object, odour, hardness and softness. Should there be first mindfulness of physical phenomena, rūpa, and later on of mental phenomena, nāma? Is there a certain order which should be followed?

B. There is no rule. Any reality which presents itself at the present moment can be object of mindfulness. We cannot direct mindfulness, sati, to such or such object. Sati ~~is~~ arises because of its own conditions. Sometimes it is mindful of rūpa and sometimes of nāma. Both nāma and rūpa have to be known as they are: as not self. If there is mindfulness ~~of~~ only of rūpa but not of nāma, nāma cannot be known as it is. For example, when odour appears there must also be a reality which experiences odour. ~~This experience is not self~~ That reality cannot see, hear or think, it can only experience odour. It arises because of its own conditions and it is not self.

~~There may be thinking of roses. Thinking is thinking, think, or is not can be object of mindfulness. The concept thinking, think, or is not real; it is not object of mindfulness.~~

A. Is it helpful for my daily life to know that there are no roses, only different phenomena which appear one at a time through different doorways? Will it help me to have more wholesomeness?

B. When odour appears and it is realized known as only a conditioned reality which can be experienced through the nose, not a 'thing' which exists, not a rose, do you cling to it?

A. No, at that moment it is not object of clinging.

B. When there is still wrong view of realities one believes that people and things really exist and clinging will increase. Wrong view conditions many other defilements, such as stinginess and jealousy. Right understanding will eradicate wrong view and eventually all other defilements.

A. Most of the time there is ignorance and forgetfulness of realities. I am discouraged about my lack of mindfulness. What should I do in order to overcome it?

B. Learning to be mindful is not as easy as learning other skills such as cooking. For example, if we want to learn the art of cooking, we can read a book and then start to cook right away. This is not the case with the development of right understanding. When we begin with its development we cannot expect to have clear understanding of realities. Isn't there attachment again if we want an immediate result? Thus, patience has to be applied. We should have

courage to begin again and again with mindfulness of any reality which appears now through one of the six doors.

A. How can I begin now?

B. Is there a reality which presents itself now?

A. There is regret about my lack of mindfulness.

B. Regret is a reality, it arises because ~~it is~~ of its own conditions. It is a kind of nāma and it can be object of mindfulness. Thus we will know that it is not self. When there is mindfulness, sati, also that reality can be object of mindfulness. ~~It is understood and understood~~ ^{thus} the idea of 'I have mindfulness' will decrease.

A. How can there be mindfulness of mindfulness? Is that ^{not} ~~mindfulness~~ of ~~the sati~~ ^{an object} which has fallen away?

B. Yes. Cittas succeed one another extremely rapidly. The sati which has just fallen away can be ~~subject~~ the object of mindfulness. Since it has only just fallen away we can still say that it is the object of the 'present moment'.

A. I am always so preoccupied with thinking of my work. It prevents me from developing mindfulness.

B. We do not like to be preoccupied, but we cannot prevent it. This shows that it is not self who thinks ~~with~~ in such a way. It is a reality which arises because of ~~its~~ control. When ~~we~~ realize this do you still take your thinking as something very important?

A. When we realize that it is only a conditioned reality which falls away immediately we are likely to attach less importance to it.

B. We think of our work, of all the people we are related to, we ~~think~~ think of the whole wide world. When there is mindfulness our world can be limited to just here and now. 'Here and now' ~~has~~ in this case ^{has} a very precise meaning: it is the reality which ~~appears~~ presents itself through one of the six doors at this ~~present~~ moment.

If we limit our world to merely one reality at a time there is at that moment wholesomeness instead of unwholesomeness. We may be inclined to have attachment to or aversion from roses, ^{However,} ~~but~~ when there is mindfulness of ~~only~~ smell and ~~that~~ it is known as only a conditioned reality which is experienced through the nose, or ~~not~~ only seeing when there is mindfulness of colour and it is known as only a reality which is experienced through the eyes, we do not think of roses being ~~very~~ beautiful or ugly. It is the same when we meet people. When there is mindfulness of one reality at a time we do not mind ~~what~~ if people say unpleasant things to us. What is heard is only sound, not a person. It is not 'I' who hears. Hearing is only a conditioned nāma. ~~It is conditioned by~~ The hearing of pleasant or unpleasant objects

~~object~~ is conditioned by kamma; After a moment of mindfulness there are bound to be defilements again, but right understanding can eventually eradicate all unwholesomeness.

A. I find it difficult to limit the world to merely one reality. For example, I keep on thinking that this is my hand or my foot.

B. What we take for my hand and my foot are in ~~the~~ reality different rūpas which arise and then fall away immediately. They have fallen away already when we think of hand or foot. Can what falls away immediately be yours?

A. No, I cannot keep it. But although I understand this, I feel disturbed by the thought that everything in my life which arises falls away immediately. What about, for instance, my spectacles. I have to use them continuously and I keep on feeling them on my nose.

B. You think of your spectacles. Which ones are there at this moment? What we take for spectacles are only different kinds of rūpa which arise and then fall away. For instance, hardness is a rūpa which can be experienced through the bodysense. The hardness which was felt a moment ago has fallen away completely. Hardness arises again and you do not notice it that it is not the same hardness anymore. It is the same with the rūpas of the body. They fall away and then new ones arise so long as there are conditions for their arising. ~~Right understanding does not make us disturbed~~ You said that you feel disturbed by the thought of impermanence. However, ~~under~~ right understanding of ~~the~~ impermanence ~~of~~ does not make us disturbed. We can lead our daily life, use our hands and feet, wear spectacles and at the same time right understanding of realities can be developed.

A. Is ~~mindfulness~~ mindfulness of nāma and rūpa the only way leading to the eradication of all defilements?

B. Defilements are so deeply rooted, they can only be eradicated gradually. Therefore the Buddha did not only teach people the development of right understanding, he also exhorted them to develop all the other ways of wholesomeness. The Buddha when he was still a Bodhisatta had to develop different kinds of virtues together with right understanding during innumerable lives. Thus he could attain Buddhahood in his last life. We ~~must~~ ~~in neglect~~ should develop any kind of kusala for which there is an opportunity. ~~For instance, we should not~~ ~~even if it is~~ ~~only a kind word or gesture, while we are waiting for the arising of~~ ~~right understanding we tend to neglect the ways of kusala which~~ ~~other ways of kusala for which there is opportunity. For instance~~ ~~example~~ ~~instance~~, generosity has to be developed. When one keeps on clinging to one's possessions how could one ever give up the clinging to the self? Morality has to be developed as well. If one keeps on lying ~~and~~ ~~slandering~~ how can defilements be eradicated? All kinds of good qualities have to be developed together with right ~~understanding~~ understanding of realities.

In the 'Gradual Sayings' (Book of the Tens, Ch VIII, par. , unable to grow) we read ~~about~~ about the conditions which

are unfavourable for the attainment of the goal of the Buddhings, which is freedom from the cycle of birth and death. On all defilements have been eradicated one does not have to be again and one is no longer subject to decay and death. When the unfavorable conditions are not abandoned one does not reach the goal. One unwholesome quality conditions another one and thus one accumulates more and more akusala. We read:

Suppose, monks, this one is ~~shameless~~ shameless, reckless and lacks seriousness. Being thus without seriousness he cannot grow so as to abandon disregard, so as to abandon stubbornness, so as to abandon friendship with the wicked. Having wicked friends he cannot ... abandon lack of faith, stinginess and indolence. Being indolent he cannot ... abandon flurry, lack of self-control and immorality. Being immoral he cannot ... abandon distaste for seeing the ariyans, distaste for hearing ariya dhamma, and a carping disposition. Having a carping disposition he cannot ... abandon forgetfulness, discomposure and mental derangement.

Being mentally deranged he cannot ... abandon lack of giving thorough attention, following the wrong way and sluggishness of mind. Being sluggish of mind ... cannot ... abandon view of the individual-group (wrong view, doubt-and-wavering and wrong handling of habit and rite (wrong practice). Doubtful-and-wavering he cannot ... abandon lust, malice and delusion. Not abandoning lust, malice and delusion, he cannot grow so as to abandon rebirth, decay and death.

We then read that when these unfavorable conditions are abandoned the goal can be reached. The sotāpanna, the ariyan who has attained the first stage of enlightenment, has eradicated wrong view and doubt. But in order to become a sotāpanna one has to associate with the right friend, listen to the Dhamma as it is explained by the right friend, and one has to develop different good qualities, such as shame for akusala and fear of its consequences, confidence in kusala (saddhā or 'faith'), generosity, morality and energy for kusala the development of kusala. It is useful to be reminded that all these good qualities have to be developed together with right understanding of nāma and rūpa. ~~Nonetheless~~ when one has become a sotāpanna one has ~~in continuous development~~ ^{attained arahatship} not reached the final goal yet. Only when one has ~~reached arahatship~~ all defilements have been eradicated and one is free from the cycle of birth and death.
